

## **Notes on the Kildwick Typhoid Epidemic – 3**

### **Identifying those who recovered**

In addition to the 10 people who died in the 1899 Kildwick typhoid epidemic, it is known from the contemporary newspaper reports that a further 40+ were confirmed as having the disease, were treated, and recovered.

Once again, assigning names to these individuals has proved difficult and at the time of writing, only a very partial list can be put together from all the sources investigated.

### **Newspaper reports**

If the newspapers of the time were a little reticent about naming those who died, they were positively trappist when it came to those who fell ill but subsequently recovered. They refer to these people in group terms, such as “other members of the household” or “children who attended Kildwick school”.

Apart from J. J. Brigg, MP, whose name was hardly out of the press in this period, only two other names were printed.

### **Notifications to the Medical Officer**

All typhoid cases had to be notified to the appropriate Medical Officer. In the case of the Kildwick epidemic this was Dr. Atkinson, who was attached to Skipton Rural District Council (RDC).

Presumably, the notifications were recorded in some sort of ledger. Unfortunately, all records for Skipton RDC for 1899 have been lost.

### **Records from Morton Banks hospital**

Many, but by no means all, of the victims were treated at the Keighley and Bingley Joint Isolation Hospital, known as Morton Banks.

Records from the hospital for the period of the Great War are held at Keighley library. Sadly, all other records have been lost.

### **Private papers of the period**

The private papers of Major Wilson, the owner of the Kildwick Estate and the landlord of many of the residents of Kildwick, are held by the West Yorkshire Archive Service, in Bradford. This archive includes a number of letters that refer to compensation paid to people as a result of the epidemic, allowing some names to be inferred.

## Conclusion – a partial list

Combining all the available sources has, so far, only allowed the creation of a partial list of the 40+ people who caught typhoid but later recovered.

### Names definitely known

Name	Address	How known
John J. Brigg, MP	Kildwick Hall	Various newspaper reports 1898/1899. Mr. Brigg was never included in official record of the victims.
Miss Miriam Green	Farnhill	From this report in the Craven Herald <sup>1</sup> : <b><i>FARNHILL</i></b> – <i>Miss Miriam Green has fallen victim to a mild type of typhoid fever, which the medical officer declares, after inquiring into the case, has no connection with the Kildwick epidemic.</i> And this letter of correction, printed the following week <sup>2</sup> : <b><i>To the Editor</i></b> – <i>Sir, ... how my sister Miss Miriam Green has contracted the disease of typhoid fever, ... contradict two statements made in your last week's issue.</i> <i>The disease has without doubt emanated from Kildwick, for we find that my sister drank of the polluted water in early January ... Consequently ... there appears no doubt whatever as to the source being Kildwick, and the attack is severe.</i> Nevertheless, it appears that Miss Green was not included in the official record of the victims. (The only adult woman from Farnhill is described as a “married lady” and certainly has at least two children.)
Mr. Hill	Bradley	From a report in the Craven Herald <sup>3</sup> : <b><i>Sequel to a Dinner: A Teetotaler Suffers</i></b> – <i>... the case of a man suspected of having contracted the disease by imbibing water at a dinner in Kildwick.</i> <i>... [he] was the only man out of those who attended a cattle club dinner at the White Lion, Kildwick, on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, who drank water. He was now ailing, and the symptoms were suspicious ...</i> This man, named in a similar report in the West Yorkshire Pioneer as “a certain Mr. Hill of Bradley”, was later to become a confirmed typhoid case. The only case in Bradley.
William Watson	Main Street, Farnhill	William Watson, the Farnhill barber, is known to have been treated in the temporary hospital set up in the Kildwick Parish Rooms. He subsequently married the nurse, Nellie Ingle <sup>13</sup> .

Name	Address	How known
William Birch Holmes	Kildwick Post Office	When Birch Holmes died in 1916 a sizeable obituary was printed in the local newspapers. This extract is from the West Yorkshire Pioneer <sup>15</sup> : <i>[He] experienced very little illness, the only time he had to be off duty on this account being during the outbreak of typhoid fever at Kildwick some seventeen years ago, when he and two of his family were affected.</i>

## Names inferred from newspaper reports

A few names can be inferred, with a reasonable degree of confidence, from the newspaper reports of the epidemic.

Name	Address	How inferred
Annie Barritt (aged 21)  Jane Barritt (aged 16)  Charles Barritt (aged 6)	Church Terrace, Kildwick	From the Keighley News report on the deaths of Mary and John Barritt <sup>4</sup> : <i>[It has] been his [Mr. John Barritt senior's] painful fate to see one of his children stricken down after another until out of eight children only two were free from typhoid at [unreadable] of this week, viz. a son of about [twenty four?] years and a daughter of about fourteen.</i>  It is possible to deduce, from the Kildwick census returns for 1891 and 1901, that the two unaffected children must have been William and Elizabeth Barritt.  A total of six cases in the Barritt household up to up to the end of January fits in with the Medical Officer's report to Skipton RDC on February 1 <sup>st</sup> and reported in the Craven Herald <sup>3</sup> and Keighley News <sup>4</sup> . Three children (Mary, John junior, and Sarah) died.
Thomas Sugden (aged 12)	Holme Bank, Kildwick	From the Craven Herald report on the death of John Sugden <sup>2</sup> : <b>KILDWICK</b> – ... John Sugden ... second son of Mr William Sugden ... Mr Sugden's younger son is suffering from the disease.
Leonard Tillotson (aged 8)  Norah Tillotson (aged 6)	Church Terrace, Kildwick	From the Craven Herald report on the death of Marjorie Tillotson <sup>5</sup> : <b>KILDWICK</b> – [Marjorie was] the eldest of the three orphans of the late Mrs. T. Tillotson. The whole of the children were being treated at the Isolation Hospital, Morton Banks ...
Louise Petty (aged 13)	White Lion, Kildwick	From the Keighley News report on the death of Abe Petty <sup>6</sup> : <i>Mr. Petty's mother died from the disease on February 1<sup>st</sup>, and his little niece is at present undergoing treatment at the Isolation Hospital.</i>

Name	Address	How inferred
Charles Law (aged 22)	Main Street, Kildwick	From the Keighley News <sup>7</sup> : <i>On Sunday last a new case was discovered in Kildwick, the patient being the son of the blacksmith.</i> The village blacksmith was William Law, Charles was his only son.
Walter Wilkinson (aged 10)	7, Mill Street Crosshills	From the Keighley News <sup>14</sup> : <i>The only new case found during this week is that of a boy about ten years of age, the son of William Wilkinson, of Junction. The boy had been ill about a fortnight, and as he had attended the Kildwick Sunday schools just prior to their being closed, his case is regarded as traceable to the epidemic.</i> An analysis of the 1901 census finds only one possible match. This must be Walter Wilkinson.
Two of: Ada Holmes (aged 29) Mary Ann (aged 26) William Holmes (aged 6)	Kildwick Post Office	Mentioned in the 1916 obituary of William Birch Holmes <i>"he and two members of his family were affected"</i> <sup>15</sup> .

### Names inferred from the papers of Major Wilson

A few names can be inferred from the letters and papers of Major Wilson.

Name	Address	How inferred
Mary Ann Heyworth	Main Street Kildwick	In a letter to his agent Mr. Broughton about victims of the epidemic, Major Wilson writes <sup>8</sup> : <i>He [Samuel Heyworth] would seem to have got off a good deal better than many, without in any way trying to minimise the trials of his wife's serious illness.</i>
Three out of: Edith Foster (aged 23) Henry Foster (aged 20) Fred Foster (aged 18) James Foster (aged 16) Herbert Foster (aged 13)	Main Street Kildwick	In a letter to Major Wilson, dated 10 <sup>th</sup> February 1899, while thanking him for his kindness, Mrs. Elizabeth Foster writes <sup>9</sup> : <i>... I am a widow with five children ... two of them are now at the hospital, and one is to care for at my own home ...</i>

There is also an undated scrawled note from Major Wilson to Mr. Broughton, apparently asking him to refund some rent money to those of his tenants who have suffered as a result of the outbreak<sup>10</sup>:

*Please return ½ yr. to the Cottages, as for the list you enclosed:*

*J Barritt*

*H Tillotson*

*Mrs. T Tillotson (the late) estate of*

*Mrs Foster*

*C. Hargreaves*

*Holmes*

This list has two households not previously identified:

- **H Tillotson** – This can only be the household of John Hartley Tillotson of Church Terrace, the man who took in the surviving remnant of the Tillotson/Baldwin family after the death of Mary Tillotson and Stanley Baldwin.
- **C Hargreaves** – Charles Hargreaves of Church Terrace. In fact, there is a case to made for including Charles Hargreaves in the list of those who died as a result of the typhoid epidemic. Rosemary Hargreaves has told the History Group that her grandfather contracted typhoid during the epidemic and never fully recovered<sup>12</sup>. He died on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1900, aged 44.

## What next – can you help put names to the other victims ?

The report of Dr. Atkinson, the Medical Officer, to the Skipton RDC meeting made towards the end of the epidemic says that 14 households in Kildwick had at least one person affected by the outbreak<sup>11</sup>. We have identified a total of 11 of these; can you help us identify the remaining 3 ?

We've put names to just 20 of the 40+ victims who fell ill but subsequently recovered. We have failed to identify:

- Which three of the Foster children and which two members of the Holmes household apart from Birch Holmes were taken ill.
- A total of at least 15 children living in nearby villages (i.e. other than Kildwick) who attended Kildwick School and had drunk the water there. Of these, 3 lived on Silsden Moor; 2 at Junction, Crosshills; and the rest lived in Farnhill.
- The mother and sibling of one of the Farnhill cases, who both acquired secondary infections whilst the original case (one of the Kildwick school-children) was cared for at home.
- An "old man" from Cononley who had worked as a stone-breaker in Kildwick in the final few weeks of 1898 and the first few of 1899.
- A young man living in Farnhill who was known to have drunk the water in Kildwick – possibly William Watson.

Do you or your family have any additional information on any of the victims of the Kildwick typhoid epidemic ? If so, the Farnhill and Kildwick Local History Group would like to hear from you. Please email [history@farnhill.co.uk](mailto:history@farnhill.co.uk).

## References

- 1 Craven Herald, February 10<sup>th</sup> 1899
- 2 Craven Herald, February 17<sup>th</sup> 1899
- 3 Craven Herald, February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1899
- 4 Keighley News, February 4<sup>th</sup> 1899
- 5 Craven Herald, March 10<sup>th</sup> 1899
- 6 Keighley News, March 18<sup>th</sup> 1899
- 7 Keighley News, March 4<sup>th</sup> 1899
- 8 From the Eshton Hall papers held at West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford. Ref 68D82/5/412
- 9 From the Eshton Hall papers held at West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford. Ref 68D82/5/421
- 10 From the Eshton Hall papers held at West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford. Ref 68D82/5/413
- 11 Craven Herald, March 24<sup>th</sup> 1899
- 12 Conversation with Rosemary Hargreaves, November 2013
- 13 Keighley News, April 21<sup>st</sup> 1945
- 14 Keighley News, March 18<sup>th</sup> 1899
- 15 West Yorkshire Pioneer, June 16<sup>th</sup> 1916